

"The Bruising of the Serpent's Head"
(Genesis 3:15b)

Introduction: This morning we saw the birth of the promised seed of the woman. His birth was a natural birth, but His conception in the womb of the Virgin was supernatural, for He was no ordinary man, but He was the Son of God. He was the Lord's Redeemer sent into the world to bring salvation to those who were in bondage to sin and subject to the consequences of sin. In accomplishing this mission given Him from the Father, He not only provided perfect righteousness to His people through His perfect obedience to the Law of God and atoned for their sins through His death on the cross, He also destroyed the kingdom of the devil by delivering a crushing blow to his head, again through the blood of His cross. This was to fulfill the prophecy concerning Him in Genesis 3:15.

In Genesis 3, we see the Fall of Adam and Eve and what transpired immediately afterward. After the man and his wife had eaten of the forbidden fruit, their eyes were opened and they sought to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord. The Lord God appeared in the garden in the spirit of the day of His judgment and called the transgressors to justice. The first that He pronounced judgment on was the serpent, that vile creature who had invaded the garden of God's paradise and who had deceived the woman into eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and who in turn gave the fruit to her husband with her, bringing down the wrath of God upon themselves, the whole human race, as well as all of creation, and allowing the devil to set up his kingdom which would seek to thwart the kingdom of God for the rest of human history. The Bible tells us that this was no ordinary serpent which tempted Eve, but was the devil himself. John tells us in Revelation 12:9, "AND THE GREAT DRAGON WAS THROWN DOWN, THE SERPENT OF OLD WHO IS CALLED THE DEVIL AND SATAN, WHO DECEIVES THE WHOLE WORLD; HE WAS THROWN DOWN TO THE EARTH, AND HIS ANGELS WERE THROWN DOWN WITH HIM." He is the sworn enemy of God, the one who desired to raise his throne above the stars of heaven and above the throne of God. He was the one who was perfect in all of his ways until the day that iniquity was found in him. Because of his hatred of God and the things of God, he sought to destroy God's creation and to turn God's creatures against Him. He was even able to bring about the rebellion of Adam and Eve against God, gaining for himself more forces to promote his rebellion against the Almighty, for they allied themselves with the devil when they listened to him and disobeyed their Creator. But his victory was short-lived. God then stepped into the picture and took up the quarrel personally against Satan. He separated Adam and Eve from their alliance with the devil by His grace. He said, "AND I WILL PUT ENMITY BETWEEN YOU AND THE WOMAN." Whereas the woman had forsaken God and had clung to the word of the devil, now God graciously turns her heart back to Himself, making her now the enemy of the devil. Furthermore, He promised a coming Champion who would take up the quarrel and finally put an end to the serpent's rebellion, "AND I WILL PUT ENMITY BETWEEN YOU AND THE WOMAN, AND BETWEEN YOUR SEED AND HER SEED; HE SHALL BRUISE YOU ON THE HEAD, AND YOU SHALL BRUISE HIM ON THE HEEL." Throughout the ages there was to be conflict and warfare between these two camps: the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. But there was also to be a final and decisive battle where the seed of the woman would deliver a crushing blow to a vital part of the enemy, but in so doing be wounded Himself. This was nothing less than the death blow delivered to the devil on the cross by Jesus Christ in His crucifixion. So this is a message of comfort by God to Adam and Eve, for in the cursing of the serpent, there is a guaranteed blessing of

redemption to themselves. This evening, we will look at the struggle between these two seeds, between these two kingdoms, and the event which forever destroyed the powers of darkness. And what I want you to see is that,

Jesus is that promised Champion of God who destroyed the works of the devil through the power of His cross, and brought salvation and immortality to light.

First we will see that the Old Testament reveals to us the working out of this warfare between the two kingdoms, but secondly, that the final and decisive mortal wound was dealt to Satan on the cross of Christ.

I. *The Old Testament Records the Battle Between the Two Seeds and Gives to Us Pictures of the Coming Final Struggle Between Their Two Heads.*

A. *Since Satan's Fall, It Has Been His Nature to Desire the Destruction of God's Works.*

1. *It appears from Scripture that he was one of the mightiest princes of the angelic realm and became the leader of the those angels which revolted and fell away from God (Berkhof 148).*
2. *He is the adversary, for that is what his name means, primarily of God.*
3. *He opposes the works of God, and that is why he attacked Adam, who was the crown of His work of creation.*
4. *He tries to destroy the works of God, and that is why he is called Apollyon in Scripture, which means "the Destroyer" (Berkhof 149).*

B. *His Attempt to Destroy the Work of God in the Garden Was Just the Beginning of His Attack.*

1. *He knew the command of God to Adam and Eve not to eat of the fruit of the tree, and that is precisely why he began the attack there, for he knew that in the day they were to eat of that tree that they would die, be cut off from the presence of God, and lose their right to the tree of life.*
2. *Again and again, we see Satan trying to destroy the works of God in Scripture, especially God's work among His covenant people.*
 - a. *Before the flood Satan was doubtless at work corrupting the hearts and minds of all men. "THEN THE LORD SAW THAT THE WICKEDNESS OF MAN WAS GREAT ON THE EARTH, AND THAT EVERY INTENT OF THE THOUGHTS OF HIS HEART WAS ONLY EVIL CONTINUALLY. AND THE LORD WAS SORRY THAT HE HAD MADE MAN ON THE EARTH, AND HE WAS GRIEVED IN HIS HEART" (Gen. 6:5-6).*
 - b. *We see Satan trying to destroy Job, who was a man upright before the Lord. This is why he is called diabolos, or the devil, which means accuser. "NOW THERE WAS A DAY WHEN THE SONS OF GOD CAME TO PRESENT THEMSELVES BEFORE THE LORD, AND SATAN ALSO CAME AMONG THEM. AND THE LORD SAID TO SATAN, 'FROM WHERE DO YOU COME?' THEN SATAN ANSWERED THE LORD AND SAID, 'FROM ROAMING ABOUT ON THE EARTH AND WALKING AROUND ON IT.' AND THE LORD SAID TO SATAN, "HAVE YOU CONSIDERED MY SERVANT JOB? FOR THERE IS NO ONE LIKE HIM ON THE EARTH, A BLAMELESS AND UPRIGHT MAN, FEARING GOD AND TURNING AWAY FROM EVIL.' THEN SATAN ANSWERED THE LORD, 'DOES JOB FEAR GOD FOR NOTHING? HAST THOU NOT MADE A HEDGE ABOUT HIM AND HIS HOUSE AND ALL THAT HE HAS, ON EVERY SIDE? THOU HAST BLESSED THE WORK OF HIS HANDS, AND HIS POSSESSIONS HAVE INCREASED IN THE LAND. BUT PUT FORTH THY HAND NOW AND TOUCH ALL THAT HE HAS; HE WILL SURELY CURSE THEE TO THY FACE.' THEN THE LORD SAID TO SATAN,*

'BEHOLD, ALL THAT HE HAS IN IN YOUR POWER, ONLY DO NOT PUT FORTH YOUR HAND ON HIM.' SO SATAN DEPARTED FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD" (Job 1:6-12). Satan could not touch Job because of God's hedge about him, otherwise he would have swallowed him up in a moment. But he wanted to destroy Job, because he was so much in God's favor.

- c. Satan also wanted to destroy the covenant people of God, and the Lord allowed him to move David to number the people for God's own ends of judgment. In 2 Samuel 24:1, we read, "NOW AGAIN THE ANGER OF THE LORD BURNED AGAINST ISRAEL, AND IT INCITED DAVID AGAINST THEM TO SAY, 'GO, NUMBER ISRAEL AND JUDAH.'" In a parallel passage, we see that in order to do this, the Lord allowed Satan to involve himself in David's affairs, "THEN SATAN STOOD UP AGAINST ISRAEL AND MOVED DAVID TO NUMBER ISRAEL" (1 Chr. 21:1). We see from this that the people of God may through their sin forfeit a measure of God's protection and bring some of Satan's cruel attacks upon themselves.
 - d. Satan even went to the Lord to require of Him that he might do what he wished to the apostle Peter. Jesus said to Peter, "SIMON, SIMON, BEHOLD, SATAN HAS DEMANDED PERMISSION TO SIFT YOU LIKE WHEAT" (Luke 22:31).
 - e. Satan desires at all times to destroy the people of God because they are the apple of His eye, but he may only do to them what the Lord allows him to.
3. But, he not only works personally to try and thwart God, he also works through those who are his. We see in Scripture several instances where the people of God were engaged in battle with the children of the serpent. I would like to focus on several of these instances where the battle between them ended in defeat for the seed of the serpent by a blow to the head, which pictures for us the coming final battle between the two seeds where the devil was going to get what was coming to him. "HE SHALL BRUISE YOU ON THE HEAD."
- a. First there is the instance of Sisera and Jael.
 - (i) The children of Israel had done what was evil in the sight of the Lord, so He sold them into the hand of Jabin, the king of Canaan.
 - (ii) Through their wickedness, the Lord gave them over to the seed of the serpent.
 - (iii) But they cried out to the Lord, and the Lord raised up two champions by the name of Deborah and Barak. Barak led the army of Israel against Jabin's commander, Sisera. They so overwhelmed Sisera's army that he fled into the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber. When he fell asleep in her tent, she "TOOK A TENT PEG AND SEIZED A HAMMER IN HER HAND, AND WENT SECRETLY TO HIM AND DROVE THE PEG INTO HIS TEMPLE, AND IT WENT THOUGH INTO THE GROUND; FOR HE WAS SOUND ASLEEP AND EXHAUSTED. SO HE DIED" (Judges 4:21).
 - (iv) In poetic language, the event is retold, "MOST BLESSED OF WOMEN IS Jael, THE WIFE OF HEBER THE KENITE; MOST BLESSED IS SHE OF WOMEN IN THE TENT. HE ASKED FOR WATER AND SHE GAVE HIM MILK; IN A MAGNIFICENT BOWL SHE BROUGHT HIM CURDS. SHE REACHED OUT HER HAND FOR THE TENT PEG, AND HER RIGHT HAND FOR THE WORKMAN'S HAMMER.

THEN SHE STRUCK SISERA, SHE SMASHED HIS HEAD; AND SHE SHATTERED AND PIERCED HIS TEMPLE. BETWEEN HER FEET HE BOWED, HE FELL, HE LAY; BETWEEN HER FEET HE BOWED, HE FELL; WHERE HE BOWED, THERE HE FELL DEAD" (5:24-27).

- b. Abimelech, the son of Gideon, very wickedly killed his seventy brothers and ruled over Israel. But when he went to attack the city of Thebez, "A CERTAIN WOMAN THREW AN UPPER MILLSTONE ON ABIMELECH'S HEAD, CRUSHING HIS SKULL" (Judges 9:53).
- c. Something similar happened when David and those who were exiled with him returned to Jerusalem. A man by the name of Sheba, who was called a "worthless fellow", revolted and led Israel away from David. Joab pursued him to Abel Beth-Maacah where they laid a siege work against that city. But a wise woman called to Joab to find out why he was attacking the city. When she found out, she wisely approached all the people of the city, "AND THEY CUT OFF THE HEAD OF SHEBA THE SON OF BICHRI AND THREW IT TO JOAB. SO HE BLEW THE TRUMPET, AND THEY WERE DISPERSED FROM THE CITY, EACH TO HIS TENT" (2 Sam. 20:22).
- d. But the most obvious example is that of David and Goliath. David in Scripture is clearly given as a type of Christ, and in 1 Samuel 17 we see him going out to fight Goliath, the champion of the seed of the serpent, the enemies of God, the Philistines. It is not insignificant that David first slung a stone which sunk deep into his forehead, and then took Goliath's own sword and cut off his head (vv. 48-51).
- e. In each of these cases, there is a very prominent man of wickedness who is destroyed by an injury to his head, inflicted by one who was faithful to God, picturing the final struggle between the Champion of the Lord and the prince of darkness.

II. But the Final Victory Over the Devil Was Won By Christ On the Cross Where He Dealt a Mortal Wound to the Serpent's Head, Fulfilling These Pictures, While Giving His Life in the Process. "HE SHALL BRUISE YOU ON THE HEAD, AND YOU SHALL BRUISE HIM ON THE HEEL."

- A. The Struggle Between the Two Kingdoms, Which Was Pictured Throughout the Old Testament, Is Finally Brought to a Climax at the Cross.
 1. Satan, as he had done with all of God's previous works, tried to thwart Jesus who came to repair the damage which was done by Adam.
 - a. First he tried to tempt Jesus into breaking the Father's will by turning the stones into bread (Matt. 4:3-4).
 - b. Then he tried to get Jesus to display His Messiahship in a grandiose way by jumping off the Temple, again against His Father's will (vv. 5-7).
 - c. Then he offered to him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory if He would bow down and worship him (vv. 8-11).
 - d. When he saw that his temptations would not sway Jesus, the Scripture tells us, "HE DEPARTED FROM HIM UNTIL AN OPPORTUNE TIME" (Luke 4:13).
 2. But Satan brought about his own end, for in seeking to destroy the Son of God, Jesus dealt the mortal blow to his head on His cross.
 - a. Satan sought to mastermind the death of Christ through Judas, and doubtlessly through the peoples of Israel as well.

- (i) Before the Passover, the Scripture tells us, "AND SATAN ENTERED INTO JUDAS WHO WAS CALLED ISCARIOT, BELONGING TO THE NUMBER OF THE TWELVE. AND HE WENT AWAY AND DISCUSSED WITH THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND OFFICERS HOW HE MIGHT BETRAY HIM TO THEM. AND THEY WERE GLAD, AND AGREED TO GIVE HIM MONEY. AND HE CONSENTED, AND BEGAN SEEKING A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO BETRAY HIM TO THEM APART FROM THE MULTITUDE" (Luke 22:3-6).
- (ii) Since Satan could not get Jesus to join him, he sought to bring about his death. To this end he doubtlessly also incited the people of Israel to desire that Barabbas be released to them instead of Jesus (23:13-25).
- b. But in so doing, he brought about his own destruction.
 - (i) Jesus said in regard to His coming crucifixion, "NOW JUDGMENT IS UPON THIS WORLD; NOW THE RULER OF THIS WORLD SHALL BE CAST OUT. AND I, IF I BE LIFTED UP FROM THE EARTH, WILL DRAW ALL MEN TO MYSELF.' BUT HE WAS SAYING THIS TO INDICATE THE KIND OF DEATH BY WHICH HE WAS TO DIE" (John 12:31-33).
 - (ii) The apostle John writes, in 1 John 3:8, "THE SON OF GOD APPEARED FOR THIS PURPOSE, THAT HE MIGHT DESTROY THE WORKS OF THE DEVIL."
 - (iii) Jesus came into this world and took upon Himself human nature to die for the sins of His people, to set them free from the power of Satan, and to remove the sting of death from them. The author to the Hebrews writes, "SINCE THEN THE CHILDREN SHARE IN FLESH AND BLOOD, HE HIMSELF LIKEWISE ALSO PARTOOK OF THE SAME, THAT THROUGH DEATH HE MIGHT RENDER POWERLESS HIM WHO HAD THE POWER OF DEATH, THAT IS, THE DEVIL" (2:14).
 - (iv) It is no wonder that Edwards called the devil the biggest block-head that ever lived, for even with all of his great intelligence, by his evil actions, he provided for his own destruction.
- B. Christ Crushed the Head of the Serpent, and, in So Doing, Gave Up His Life. "HE SHALL BRUISE YOU ON THE HEAD, AND YOU SHALL BRUISE HIM ON THE HEEL."
 - 1. This victory over the devil, as was prophesied to the serpent and to Adam and Eve in the garden, did not come without a cost, it cost Him His very life.
 - 2. The Son of God poured out His life unto death, but His was not a mortal wound, it was but a bruise on the heel.
 - a. His victory over the devil meant that Satan, who was destined to burn eternally in the lake of fire, would not be able to bring all of mankind with him and utterly destroy the works of God.
 - b. Jesus delivered those whom the Father had given Him.
 - c. It cost Him an excruciating death on the cross, but you must not forget that He rose again from the dead, and is exalted, having received all power and honor and authority. And He will reign forevermore.

III. Uses.

- A. This Text Calls You to Two Things Tonight. First You Must Realize As You Go Through Life that the Devil is a Very Real Adversary to Your

Soul.

1. The Bible says that all of us were at one time in his kingdom of darkness.
 - a. All of you were conceived in the womb of your mother in sin, even as David was (Ps. 51).
 - b. All of you were allied with the devil for at least some period of time, some of you more than others.

2. And unless you have had a real conversion from that darkness to the kingdom of light, you are still a prisoner of the devil.
 - a. If that is the case, then realize the devil wants to drag you down to hell.
 - b. He doesn't want you to glorify and honor God, he wants to see you utterly ruined.
 - c. There are those who willingly follow the devil thinking that they are going to benefit in the long run.
 - d. But he is playing all of them for fools, for they do not realize that he is laughing at their utter folly and is delighting in the fact that they will be tormented eternally.
 - e. Which side are you on tonight? Whose kingdom are you in?
 - f. If you have never been converted to Christ, if you have never seen the direction of your heart decidedly turn toward loving and serving Christ above everything else in this life, then you need to be converted this evening.
 - g. Call upon Christ! Receive Him by faith! Turn from your sins and be saved!

3. But even if you are converted here this evening, you must still realize that the devil wants to do everything in his power to destroy God's work in you.
 - a. It is true that he can never overcome God's grace in your life. You can never be lost.
 - b. But there is a great deal that he can yet do to you, if by your ignorance or sin, you allow him to.
 - c. He can lead you into error. He can cause you to oppose the work of God's kingdom for a time. He can cause you to think too highly and optimistically about the conversion of some, and thus lull you into a false security about confronting them with their need of repentance and faith.
 - d. You must not forget that he is a liar, and the father of all lies. You must not listen to him even for a minute, but search the Scriptures, praying that God would open your eyes to see and know and do the truth.

- B. But This Text also Calls You to Be Aware that the Son of God Has Come in Order to Destroy His Works, and He Has in Fact Triumphed.
 1. Maybe you feel like Peter tonight when he was being sifted like wheat by the enemy.
 2. What a shock it must have been to Peter to know that the prince of darkness was asking to deal with him personally. He probably feared what the outcome of the devil's working would be.
 3. But don't forget what Jesus said after that, "BUT I HAVE PRAYED FOR YOU, THAT YOUR FAITH MAY NOT FAIL; AND YOU, WHEN ONCE YOU HAVE TURNED AGAIN, STRENGTHEN YOUR BROTHERS" (Luke 22:32).

4. *If you feel sifted and overrun by the enemy this evening, take hope in the fact that Jesus has overcome the devil. The devil can do nothing to you now that God does not have a good purpose in letting him do.*
5. *And remember, Christ is continually interceding for you in heaven, even as He did for Peter on earth. Therefore, you will overcome by the grace of Christ.*
6. *People of God, on this Christmas Eve, let us be thankful for the Lord's Champion, who pulled the teeth out of the lion, who destroyed him who had the power of death and removed its sting once and for all for His people. Let us thank the Father for sending us His Son, in order that He might redeem us from the jaws of death, and give to us eternal life. Let us be thankful for Jesus. Amen!*